A U M

A man is not a custodian of the Law because he speaks much; but he who having studied the Law only a little, yet can visualize it in himself, is called "The Custodian of the Law," for he is not negligent therein. —THE DHAMMAPADA.

THEOSOPHY

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THE REAL NEW YEAR

A SCIENTIST of the last century said, "The whole *past* of the Earth is nothing but an unfolded present." A present-day physicist observes: "Events do not happen; we come across them." These ideas have their synthesis and their explanation in two statements found in *The Secret Doctrine:* " . . . matter, after all, is nothing else than the sequence of our own states of consciousness"; "Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration."

This view is through the eye of the changeless, all-perceiving Spirit. Cycles produced by the succession and sequence of our own states of consciousness are but illusions, *per se,* though "concrete realities for the Entities of whose experience they form a part." We, as such entities, it is said, must exhaust the experience of every plane, before we may reach to wisdom—"knowledge of *things in themselves.*"

To make practical the sublime metaphysics of Theosophical philosophy, it is necessary to apply them in every phase of human experience. The turning of the annual cycle is an event—like every other event in time—which has deep occult significance. To learn such meanings *is* to exhaust the experience of the plane whereon we are now active.

H. P. Blavatsky was one who knew "what are the meaning and the times of the cycles." She wrote:

To be brief, it is January the 4th which ought to be selected by the Theosophists—the Esotericists especially—as their New Year. January is under the sign of Capricornus, the mysterious *Makara* of the Hindu mystics—the "Kumaras," it being stated, having incarnated in mankind under the 10th sign of the Zodiac. For ages the 4th of January has been sacred to Mercury-Budha, or Thoth-Hermes. Thus everything combines to make of it a festival to be held by those who study ancient Wisdom.

GREAT THEOSOPHISTS

The Theosophical Renaissance

Buddhism + Tibet.

At the dawn of the fourteenth century the sky of Europe was grey and lowering. Dull, sodden clouds of discontent were slowly forming above the horizon, coming together like droves of huge black beasts. In their wake small, hurrying clouds of hope urged them on, faster and faster. Here and there pale streamers of light crept over the rim of the world, promising the day was not far off. Each one was met by long, creeping fingers of savage red, writhing out to strangle it the moment it was born. The whole of Christendom reeked with the stench of blood, and fear was in the heart of every man.

The intellectual awakening begun in the two previous centuries had not yet diminished the power of the Church. The slightest whisper of protest against its dictatorial authority was punished by excommunication, and by 1327 it was estimated that half the Christian world was under the ban. Bishops were excommunicated if they could not meet the extortions put upon them. Ordinary people were excommunicated to compel them to purchase absolution at an exorbitant price, and even the lower kingdoms were not exempt from priestly malediction. The Church chroniclers relate that St. Bernard was attacked by a swarm of flies one day just as he ascended the pulpit. The Saint uttered the formula of excommunication and the flies fell dead at his feet. The Bishop of Lausanne, learning that the eels in the lake were troubling the fishermen, excommunicated them with great success, and later all the may-bugs in his diocese were destroyed in the same way. As late as 1731 an entry appeared in the Municipal Register of Thonon which read: "Resolved, that this town join with other parishes of this province in obtaining from Rome an excommunication against the insects, and that it will contribute *pro rata* to the expenses of the same." (Menebrea: *Procès au Moyen Age contre les Animaux.*)

The Church of the fourteenth century was also the State, and everyone was obliged to pay taxes to Rome. It had its own prisons, and courts which might sentence offenders for life. Under its highly organized financial system the wealth of the Church steadily increased. The Crusades had made the whole of Europe subject to its levies, and the sale of ecclesiastical positions, absolutions and indulgences brought in a steady flow of gold. In the great Roman Jubilee of 1300 so much money was left by the pilgrims that two

men were kept busy raking in the offerings, which were then deposited in the tomb of St. Peter.

Luxury had now become a necessity to the Popes, whose Courts were the most voluptuous in Europe. Their ever-increasing demands made a miracle necessary if this luxury were to be continued. And just when it was most needed, the miracle occurred. A great alchemist appeared, Arnold de Villanova by name, who claimed to have the power of transmuting base metals into gold. When Pope John XXII heard the news he went to Villanova as his pupil, learned his secret, and is said to have manufactured in one day gold ingots worth $3,000,000. After the Pope's death 18,000,000 florins in gold and 7,000,000 in jewels were found in his coffers.

The ancient science of Alchemy had now been degraded into Black Magic, and alchemical "adepts" flourished like the green bay-tree. The history of the fourteenth century is illuminated by the romantic lives of the physician-alchemist Villanova; the philosopher-alchemist Raymond Lully; the kabalist-alchemist Nicolas Flamel; the poet-alchemist Jean de Meung; the Pope-alchemist John XXII; and the monk-alchemist Ferarius, who specialized in the palingenesis of plants. From that century onward the study of alchemy and magic spread like wildfire among the clergy, and by the end of the sixteenth century there was scarcely a parish where the priests were not studying these subjects. The Vatican was filled with confiscated manuscripts, commonly supposed to have been burned. But the Vatican itself, were it able to speak, could tell a different story. It could tell of certain closets and rooms, the entrances to which are carefully concealed in the carved framework and under the profuse ornamentation of the library walls. Many Popes have lived and died in the Palace without suspecting the existence of these secret hiding-places. But those Popes were not Sylvester II, Benedict IX, John XX, nor the VIth and VIIth Gregorys. Neither were they the Borgia nor the friends of the sons of Loyola.

Among the various alchemists of the fourteenth century, two may be selected as important to our study—Raymond Lully and Peter Bono. The former was the son of a wealthy Spanish gentleman, and was born on the Island of Majorca in 1235. During his travels in the East he came in contact with the Hermetic philosophy and acquired proficiency in several Oriental languages. Upon his return to Europe he introduced the study of Oriental literature and languages into several European Universities, in this way forging an intellectual link between the East and the West. While Lully was living in Italy he met John Cremer, Bishop of Westminster,

who, like himself, was a deep student of the occult sciences. Through Cremer's influence Lully was invited to go to England as the guest of King Edward III. In order to help the King at a time of great need, Lully produced the famous *Rose Nobles,* said to be worth about $18,000,000. These coins were of the purest gold, the inscription around them distinguishing them from all other coins of this period.

In 1330, fifteen years after the death of Raymond Lully, an important work appeared, dealing with the *philosophy* of Alchemy. It was written by Peter Bono, who had studied the Hermetic philosophy in Persia and who was also known as a Rosicrucian. This book was issued as a protest against the degradation of the Hermetic science, and as an effort to bring it back to its original high position without giving out its forbidden secrets. For, as H. P. B. says, "Bono was a genuine Adept and Initiate; and such do not leave their secrets behind them in MSS."

In the thirteenth century Christian Europe for the first time in her history began to learn of the splendor of the East. The elder Polos returned to Venice from their travels in 1269, bringing tales of a vast country where the arts were highly developed, where books on philosophy, religion and political science were printed upon paper with moveable type, where courtesy was a commonplace affair and religious intolerance was unknown. They also brought back a request from Kublai Khan for a hundred learned Christian scholars, "intelligent and acquainted with the Seven Arts, able to enter into controversy and to *prove* that the Law of Christ was best." In response two ignorant Dominican friars were sent by the Church to "convert the heathen." To these two uneducated monks was entrusted the spiritual destiny of an empire that reached from the borders of Poland to the Yellow Sea, from the Siberian Steppes to India. But the difficulties of travel soon dampened their ardor, and the missionaries returned to their quiet monasteries, leaving the heathen to their fate. When other missionaries finally reached the Court of Kublai Khan, their arguments fell upon deaf ears. "Why should I become a Christian?" the great Khan inquired. "There are four Prophets worshipped and revered by all the world—Jesus, Mohammed, Moses and the Buddha. *I pay respect to all four!*" This was a new idea to the missionaries. The thought of religious tolerance was something they had never considered. They knew that Marco Polo had declared that the life of the Buddha was as pure and unselfish as that of Jesus, and now the Khan was putting two other Prophets

in the same category! Their mission was not to show the superiority of Jesus' teachings, but to advance the vast claims of the Pope to world dominion. As H. G. Wells remarks: "Christianity so vitiated *was not good enough for the Mongol mind.* To make the Empire of the Mongols part of the Kingdom of God might have appealed to them; but not to make it a fief of a group of French and Italian priests, whose claims were as gigantic as their powers and outlook were feeble." (*Outline of History.*)

Thus Asia was "lost" to Christianity. The Mongols in China and Central Asia embraced Buddhism, while the rest turned to Islam. The torch of spiritual knowledge which was to illumine the world during the coming centuries was not destined to be carried from the West to the East, but from the East to the West. This torch was kindled from the flame of wisdom then burning in Tibet, and its lighting marked the beginning of the Theosophical Renaissance in the Western world.

Two thousand years earlier, a Prince had been born in Kapilavastu, an Indian city not far from the borders of Tibet. He is now known as Gautama the Buddha, the greatest Man-Reformer the world has ever known, the "Man of Men," as the Masters call him, and the system of religious philosophy he left behind him has produced thousands of generations of good and unselfish men. Unlike Christianity and Islam, Buddhism did not gain its converts by persecution, sword or fire, and the pages of its history are free from the stains of blood. But Buddhism met the same fate as all other philosophical systems which were turned into *religions* after the death of the Teacher, and eventually a separation into the Southern and Northern Church came about. Southern Buddhism, which is now the ruling religion of Ceylon, Siam and Burma, was founded upon the pure *exoteric* teachings of the Buddha. Northern Buddhism, which is practiced in Tibet, China and Nepal, was the outcome of the Buddha's *esoteric* teachings, which were confined to his elect Bikshus and Arhats. At the present day Buddhism can be properly appreciated only by blending the philosophy of the Southern Church with the metaphysics of the Northern Schools.

Although Gautama brought his message to India, within fifty years after his death the true spirit of his teachings had disappeared from that land. But when Dharmasoka, grandson of the great Chandragupta, ascended the throne, he brought Buddhism back to the sons of Aryavarta, and soon, from the silver strands of Ceylon to the emerald Vale of Kashmir, India once more echoed to the doctrines of Sakya-Muni. The Brahmans, greatly disturbed

by this catastrophe, began a persecution against the Buddhists. After the death of Asoka, the Arhats gradually departed from India and sought refuge on the other side of the Himalayas. There they joined forces with another group of Initiates who had lived in that part of the world for untold ages. These *pre-Buddhist* ascetics were the direct successors of those Aryan Sages who did not accompany their brothers in the prehistoric emigration from Lake Manasasarovara into India, but who chose to remain in their secret and inaccessible retreat. These Adepts are known as the "Brothers of the Snowy Range," or the "Great Teachers of the Snowy Mountain." In the manuscripts of the sacred library of Fo-Kien, Tibet (*Si-Dzang*) is mentioned as the great seat of occult learning from time immemorial, and the Emperor Yu (2207 B. C.) is said to have acquired his wisdom from these "Brothers of the Snowy Range." The theosophist knows Them as the *Mahatmas,* the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, who have renounced the state of bliss to which They are entitled in order to remain on earth for the benefit of suffering humanity. Many of these "Brothers" are living in physical bodies, while others are *Nirmanakayas,* existing in glorious invisible vestures which They have woven for themselves during the long process of their evolution and perfection. According to a statement made by the venerable Chohan-Lama—the Chief of the Archive Registers of the libraries containing the esoteric manuscripts belonging to the Dalai and Panchen Lamas—the time that these great Initiates can remain on earth is without a fixed limit. "They can descend or remain on earth for centuries or millenniums."

Tibet is still the "land of mystery," the one country in the world which has kept itself relatively free from outside influences, and which in almost every case still refuses admittance to the curiosity-seeking foreigner. The aborigines of Tibet—now a degraded race—are the descendants of once mighty and wise forefathers. Their ethnical characteristics show that they are not pure Turanians, and their religion, called *Bhon,* shows a marked resemblance to the popular rites of the Babylonians. In reality, the Bhon religion is a degenerated remnant of the secret teaching which was the source of the Chaldean Mysteries, and which in the course of time sank into sorcery and necromancy. Its followers include a sect called *Dugpas,* or "Red Caps," whose history forms a close parallel to that of the "Red Hats" of Rome.

Buddhism was first introduced into Tibet in the year A. D. 436, when a Buddhist Arhat belonging to the dynasty of the Moryas left India for Tibet, carrying with him one of the seven golden

statues of Sakya-Muni made shortly after his death. Seven years later the first Buddhist monastery was built in Tibet. Two hundred years later, in the seventh century, Buddhism was formally introduced into the country by a pious Chinese Princess who had married a Tibetan King and converted him to Buddhism. This King sent his brother to India to acquaint himself more fully with the Buddhist doctrines. On his return to Tibet he brought back the great body of truth contained in the Buddhist canonical Scriptures. He framed the Tibetan language from the Devanagari characters and translated the Buddhist Canon into the language of his people. But Buddhism did not mix well with the old Bhon religion, and during the next seven hundred years the pure teachings of the Buddha became almost unrecognizable.

The fourteenth century marked the end of the first septenary cycle of Tibetan Buddhism, which was concurrent with the dark age of the Theosophical Movement in Europe. In the early part of this century an event occurred which was destined to change the history not only of Tibet but of Europe as well. A great Adept, known as Tsong-kha-pa, was born in Amdo in the province of Koko-nor. According to the tradition, he was born of a virgin mother, and his birth was foretold by the appearance of a giant lotus, or *Udumbara,* which blossomed in a lake at the foot of the Himalayas as it had bloomed two thousand years before at the birth of Gautama. The records preserved in the lamasary of the Panchen Lama shows that it was Buddha Himself, in his aspect of *Amita,* who incarnated Himself in Tsong-kha-pa in consequence of the great degradation into which his doctrines had fallen. The incarnation of Tsong-kha-pa marked the beginning of the regular system of Lamaic "reincarnations." The real mystery lying behind these "reincarnations" has never been explained, although enough hints have been given to suggest that they are not entirely "superstitions."

Whatever the mystery of Tsong-kha-pa's birth may have been, there is no doubt as to his mission. One of his first acts was to forbid the necromancy which was then being practiced by the *Dugpas,* and to found the order of the *Gelukpas* ("Yellow Caps") and the mystic Brotherhood connected with its Chiefs. At the present day only a few of these *Dugpas* are found in Eastern Tibet, most of them being in Nepal, Sikkim and Western Tibet. Unfortunately, it is from these "Red Caps" that the ordinary traveler gets most of his notions about Lamaism. Few westerners who penetrate into Tibet at the present day have any idea that real, *esoteric*

Buddhism still exists in the country, and that the "Brothers of the Snowy Range" still live and teach.

The mission of Tsong-kha-pa did not end with the establishment of the "Yellow Caps" in opposition to the "Red Caps." He summoned all the Adepts in the world to a conference in Tibet, where a system of Laws was formulated and certain Rules laid down for all to follow. Since the time of Tsong-kha-pa, no one has been admitted into the secret School without first declaring that his purpose in seeking entrance was "to be the better able to help and teach others."

At this conference it was decided that the time was now ripe for the *open* work of the Theosophical Movement to begin in Europe. Ever since that time, during the last quarter of every century an effort has been made to bring the work of the Theosophical Movement before the public. From the fourteenth century onward, the history of Europe reveals a new spirit; there appears an ever-growing stream of individuals working under the direction of the Trans-Himalayan Adepts. The last Messenger and Representative of these "Brothers of the Snowy Range" was H. P. Blavatsky, whose *Secret Doctrine* "contains all that can be given out to the world in this century."

ANCIENT AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY

If there is anything on earth like progress, Science will some day have to give up, *nolens volens,* such monstrous ideas as her physical, self-guiding *laws* — void of soul and Spirit, — and then turn to the occult teachings. It has done so already, however altered are the title-page and revised editions of the Scientific Catechism. It is now over half a century since, in comparing modern with ancient thought, it has been found that, however different our philosophy may appear from that of our ancestors, it is, nevertheless, composed only *of additions* and *subtractions* taken from the old philosophy and *transmitted drop by drop through the filter of antecedents.*

—H. P. BLAVATSKY.

"MENTAL DEVOTION"

THE so-called devotional books of theosophical literature are few in number and slender in contents when measured by volume or intellectual standards of value. They are the translation into verbal language of so much of the universal or mystery speech as the limitations of the former permit.

Words are the language of the *human* mind. They do not exist above or below the level of that mind except as sounds—which are, together with pictures or sight, the two modes of the universal language which corresponds to oral and written speech. One expresses his ideas in words, but his feelings, his desires, his sensations, his will, are manifested far more in tone, expression and gesture than by any number of dictionary terms.

The very beginning of Occultism, as its culmination, lies therefore in acute and accurate observation of what is seen and heard, whether on inner or outer planes of perception. Men are naturally sincere and truthful, but few indeed are those who are accurate either in perception or expression. This inaccuracy is what has to be recognized, faced, overcome, rather than any inherent or acquired tendency to untruthfulness. No one can be exact and untruthful, so that the exercise of the innate power of perception with the end in view of being accurate in both impression and expression is the natural corrective of erroneous, exaggerated, defective or false employ of the seven spiritual senses. Improvement in the quality and range of any one of these senses tends steadily to raise the dependable value of them all—as anyone may discern for himself by simply applying this principle of Occultism, designated in Sanskrit as *Dharana.*

Reduced to terms, Dharana is defined as "fixing the mind on a place, object, or subject." When one does this, or attempts to do it, consciously, he finds that Dharana as it actually exists in himself is involuntary, not the result of his will or intention. We are aware that our nervous system is an exhibit of the same dual control, one within our power, the other beyond it. This mystery of the physiological structure baffles our science, but the mystery of the duality in the psychological nature is far more recondite—so much so that Western psychologists make no effort to solve it. This means that none of them is able to practice Dharana except in the same sense as the most ordinary man—that is to say involuntarily.

Observing a little more closely, one will be forced to the inference that no one knows the address of the man who is able to give his whole attention to anything, or to withdraw his attention—at will. Men are able to give their attention to any subject or object which interests them, but not otherwise. To the degree that they are interested they are able to concentrate, but equally in the same degree they are unable to dismiss from their minds the subject or object contemplated.

The body, the senses, the mind, constitute the three-fold instrument of the incarnated Ego or Soul. Each is capable of independent action—within limits. Being limits they should be definitely ascertainable, if attention is turned in that direction. A slight departure from their normal function, and derangement ensues. A little more, and the nexus between body, senses and mind is interfered with to the extent that the fixing power of the Ego, *i. e.*, his will, is no longer effective. The disturbance of equilibrium if then augmented by a mere trifle, ruptures the whole combination and we say that the man is dead.

The moment there is a variation from normal in any department of our being, the tendency to aberration increases by affection or sympathy until the disturbance compels our attention. As alienation of function increases, our attention becomes more and more involuntary. This is the familiar accompaniment of derangement, and every man has the unhappy experience of being unable to take his mind off his troubles by an act of the will. Even when the triple mechanism of our consciousness is at its best instead of its worst, who is able to "intend his will" to the point of dismissing the undesirable and giving his whole attention to its opposite? Conversely and strangely enough, who is able to remove his attention voluntarily from all that he esteems and place it as equably on what he dislikes?

The pendulum of thought, will, and feeling constantly swings back and forth within the two extremes we know as liking and disliking, not only without our will but against it. Yet it is in any man's power to place, more or less successfully at the beginning, his attention on his own thoughts, desires, sensations, emotions, memories, imaginations, purely as subjects or objects of contemplation—that is, as apart from either attachment or repulsion. This would be to attempt Dharana in the sense of that word as used in Occultism. It means the deliberate substitution of will-attention for desire-attention, and is necessarily wholly devoid of self-interest in the survey. Only then can one look and listen purely to learn—

to discern "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," regardless of what the truth may disclose.

"Fixing the attention," then, is primarily an act of the will. This is not necessarily contingent on the nature of the subject or object contemplated, nor on our predilection for or our prejudice against what is chosen for observation. All men are capable of Dharana, all men frequently employ it, but they do it without observing that they do so, and in consequence are continually subject to unanticipated reactions. So long as we are awake we give our attention to one subject or object after another in an unending series, one suggesting another, and never observe that this attention is an induced one, which is but to say an involuntary one.

Putting them in alphabetical order, the four devotional books of Theosophy are: *The Bhagavad-Gita, Light on the Path, The Voice of the Silence,* and *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali.* Nor is this a bad order in which to correlate them, as observation and experience will amply testify.

But here, too, what the lawyers call a *caveat* should be entered. All these books, as said, treat of the "Heart Doctrine," not of any of the theories with which we are already by far too much indoctrinated. "Devotion," in the Heart Doctrine, has a meaning unknown in religion, science, and philosophy as studied and applied among men generally. As an "exercise" in Occultism, every aspirant to "true devotion" might well "fix his attention" on this subject of Devotion itself, as dealt with in the language of the Heart Doctrine.

"Rapport"

Genuine philanthropy puts the individual *en rapport* with the *Divine Spirit* and thus gives him the eternal life. The Divine Spirit being all-pervading, those who put themselves *en rapport* with it, necessarily put themselves *en rapport* with all other entities in the same *rapport.* Hence, the Mahatmas are necessarily in constant magnetic relation with those who succeed in extricating themselves from the lower animal nature. It is by this means that the Mahatmas must first be known. —The Path.

THE DREAM OF PROGRESS

> The Sons of Wisdom, or the *spiritual* Dhyanis, had become "intellectual" through their contact with matter, because they had already reached, during previous cycles of incarnation, that degree of intellect which enabled them to become independent and self-conscious entities, *on this plane* of matter. They were reborn only by reason of Karmic effects. They *entered* those who were "ready," and became the Arhats, or *sages,* . . .
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> . . . those who were "half ready," who received "but a spark," constitute the average humanity which has to acquire its intellectuality during the present Manvantaric evolution, . . .
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> . . . those which "were not ready" at all, the latest Monads, which had hardly evolved from their last transitional and lower animal forms at the close of the Third Round, remained the "narrow-brained." . . . Those tribes of savages, whose reasoning powers are very little above the level of the animals, are not the unjustly disinherited, or the *unfavoured*, as some may think—nothing of the kind. They are simply those *latest arrivals* among the human Monads, which *were not ready:* which have to evolve during the present Round, as on the three remaining globes (hence on four different planes of being) so as to arrive at the level of the average class when they reach the Fifth Round. (*The Secret Doctrine* II, 167-8.)

THEORIES of education, of social reform, of human evolution, which fail to take into account the fundamental differences among the races of mankind, are inevitably confronted by practical difficulties of insuperable proportions. There is, of course, no question but that anthropologists realize that some races are far more intelligent than others. The error lies in regarding the presence or lack of intelligence as wholly explicable in terms of physical heredity and external environment. Some modern students, however, are aware of the anomalies in the simple biological explanation of heredity. Sociological studies have shown that very often men of "primitive" origins, or allegedly inferior stock, when transferred to the environment of civilization develop surprisingly, sometimes surpassing in intellectual and other capacities the members of the so-called "higher" races. Such marked adaptability leads to the view that "environment" is by far the most important factor in human evolution.

Complete philosophies of government have been reared on these doubtful foundations of scientific theory, which might better be called pseudo-scientific, in view of the unsettled status of the

heredity-environment controversy. Communism, for example, may be described as the theory that all inequalities among men will eventually be eliminated through education, that is, by providing the proper environment. Fascism, on the other hand, and particularly the Nazi variety, dogmatically asserts that heredity is all-important, subscribing to the myth that superiority is a matter of germ plasm—a practical application of modern eugenic madness.

Whatever mystical superstructure may be reared upon these systems, they remain rooted in the materialism of mechanistic biology and psychology. Neither Marxian metaphysics nor the Nazi ideology permit any *overt* contradictions of their materialistic bases. The brutalizing effects of the endeavor to force a society of human beings into the Procrustean bed of supposedly scientific speculations has become increasingly evident in recent years—and abhorrent to the real scientists. One may hope that the innate moral character of both the Russian and German peoples will be able to transcend the dire fruitage of these seeds of moral destruction.

Viewing these systems apart from their emotional props and pragmatic justifications, we can see that each rests upon a mutually contradictory array of facts or evidence. Sometimes heredity *seems* to be an overpowering influence; in other cases environment demonstrates its superiority. But there are still others where neither theory is at all adequate. Obviously, the mechanistic explanation does not explain; it only describes secondary and modifying causes which require further elucidation. Theosophy here points out that the physical and intellectual characteristics of a race are sustained by and change with the egos so embodied. It suggests that the great disparities between individuals of the same race are accounted for only by the teaching of the confusion of caste during the present dark age, or *Kali Yuga,* when the Monads of various degrees of development are in heterogeneous association.

Another approach to the problem of human development lies in Rationalism—the theory that all progress lies in the development of the philosophical insight provided by reason. Truth may be known by logical analysis based on an inner certainty that there is knowledge and that it can be acquired. Philosophy, considered apart from religious revelations and their scholastic rationalizations, has for ages attempted to build intelligible and practical conceptions of the universe and man. So far it has failed, mainly because in no case have two speculative philosophers come to the same conclusions as to ultimate truth, thereby precluding any wide practical application of their systems. In addition to this, the men

concerned with government have not been inclined to turn their realms into laboratories for sociological experiment. Even Plato was unable to sustain the weak nature of Dionysius the Younger in the attempt to make Sicily exemplify the Republic.

While there is far more to be said for rationalism than for the materialistic conceptions, its central defect is the lack of a sound basis in psychology. Like Athena, who stepped fully armed from the brain of Zeus, rationalism has no scientific explanation of its own origin. In other words, intellect is constrained to account for its own existence—a thing hardly possible. Another difficulty arises from the fact that more or less success in rational inquiry is incapable of preventing the subsequent decline of civilization. Cycles of enlightenment come about, apparently through the illumination of the rational spirit, but it is equally evident that men's minds seem to be impenetrable to reason during the downward course. History is far more a record of the unreason, than of the reason of human beings. The solution of rationalism, therefore, while appealing to many individuals, provides no warrant of its sufficiency for society as a whole. As has been clearly indicated by Lecky, dialectic is a symptom, a justification rather than the cause, of changes in men's attitudes and ways of thinking. This view occurs also in Buckle, and has its classic statement in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 326-7). A passage from Lecky's Introduction to *Rationalism in Europe* puts the idea clearly:

> The pressure of the general intellectual influences of the time determines the predispositions which ultimately regulate the details of belief; and though all men do not yield to that pressure with the same facility, all large bodies are at last controlled. A change of speculative opinions does not imply an increase of the data upon which those opinions rest, but a change of the habits of thought and mind which they reflect. Definite arguments are the symptoms and pretexts, but seldom the causes of the change. Their chief merit is to accelerate the inevitable crisis. They derive their force and efficacy from their conformity with the mental habits of those to whom they are addressed. Reasoning which in one age would make no impression whatever, in the next age is received with enthusiastic applause. It is one thing to understand its nature, but quite another to appreciate its force.
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> And this standard of belief, this tone and habit of thought, which is the supreme arbiter of the opinions of successive periods, is created, not by the influences arising out of any one department of intellect, but by the combination of all the intellectual and even social tendencies of the age.

The same criticism applies to the religious theory of progress. The essential conception of religion is that there is some miraculous short-cut to Truth, to liberation. Western religionists have maintained that they possess *the* truth, despite its contradictions of the findings of scientific and rational inquiry. This necessitated the theory that final knowledge is independent of both experience and reason. Modern religious-minded men have pared the idea of revelation down to a spineless conformity with philosophical and scientific speculation, making the religious mode of knowing into a mystical "feeling" of little more than poetic significance.

Despite the rage for science, it is just to say that today an equal proportion of the best minds of the race will be found inclining to the three great world-views broadly characterized by Materialism, Rationalism, and Mysticism. As a matter of fact, the theosophist knows that there is truth in each of these points of view; that the fault lies in the failure to recognize their proper inter-relation, their *interdependence,* and their relative importance. But the synthesis of philosophy, science and religion can never come about by efforts made on a plane where they are of necessity divided by the triune cognitive process of the lower mind of man. Indeed, the continued separation and opposition of these views only lead to the destruction of civilization. What, in fact, do they represent?

According to *The Secret Doctrine*—

> . . . there exists in Nature a triple evolutionary scheme, for the formation of the three *periodical Upadhis;* or rather three separate schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point. These are the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions. These three are the finite aspects or the reflections on the field of Cosmic Illusion of ATMA, the seventh, the ONE REALITY.
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> 1. The Monadic is, as the name implies, concerned with the growth and development into still higher phases of activity of the Monad in conjunction with:—
>
> 2. The Intellectual, represented by the Manasa-Dhyanis (the Solar Devas, or the Agnishwatta Pitris) the "givers of intelligence and consciousness" to man and:—
>
> 3. The Physical, represented by the Chhayas of the lunar Pitris, round which Nature has concreted the present physical body. This body serves as the vehicle for the "growth" (to use a misleading word) and the transformations through Manas and—owing to the accumulation of experience—of the finite into the INFINITE, of the transient into the Eternal and Absolute.

> Each of these three systems . . . is represented in the constitution of man, the Microcosm of the great Macrocosm; and it is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is. (I, 181.)

As remarked elsewhere by H. P. B., "Though there are seven principles in man, there are but three distinct Upadhis (bases), in each of which his Atma may work independently of the rest." (I, 158.) These three "Upadhis" or vehicles quite evidently correspond to the three lines of evolution. While the Adept can separate these Upadhis without killing himself, "He cannot separate the seven principles from each other without destroying his constitution." It is one thing for an adept, fully conscious on higher planes, to "separate the Upadhis"; He knows what he is doing. But the division of knowledge into the departments of philosophy, science and religion is an ignorant reflection of this higher possibility, which can only lead to the terrible consumation described by one of the Masters:

> The intellectual portion of mankind seems to be fast dividing into two classes: the one unconsciously preparing for itself long periods of temporary annihilation or states of non-consciousness, owing to the deliberate surrender of intellect and its imprisonment in the narrow grooves of bigotry and superstition—a process which cannot fail to lead to the utter deformation of the intellectual principle; the other unrestrainedly indulging its animal propensities with the deliberate intention of submitting to annihilation pure and simple, in case of failure, and to millenniums of degradation after physical dissolution. Those intellectual classes reacting upon the ignorant masses—which they attract, and which look up to them as noble and fit examples to be followed—degrade and morally ruin those they ought to protect and guide. Between degrading superstition and still more degrading brutal materialism, the White Dove of Truth has hardly room whereon to rest her weary unwelcome feet.

This passage, considered in connection with the three lines of evolution, shows that failure, as well as success, is accomplished through *Mind,* the "middle" upadhi which constitutes the relationship between Spirit and Matter. Made to serve the latter, either in the terms of animalism or of sacerdotalism, it is itself degraded, and finally rendered useless as a basis for Manasic action.

The alternative to this fate must be sought and found. It lies, first, in a true understanding of the nature of evolution, in its physical, intellectual, and spiritual or Monadic aspects; second, in a

study of the various degrees of being engaged in evolution. In connection with the latter problem, the student might find it useful to ponder a statement in *The Secret Doctrine:*

> The MONADS of the lowest specimens of humanity (the "narrow-brained" savage South-Sea Islander, the African, the Australian) *had no Karma to work out when first born as men, as their more favoured brethren in intelligence had.* The former are spinning out Karma only now; the latter are burdened with past, present, and future Karma. In this respect the poor savage is more fortunate than the greatest genius of *civilized countries.* (II, 168.)

A theory of progress or evolution with respect to human beings on this earth—and the lower kingdoms as well—must take into consideration the limited capacities of many, as well as the unrealized potentialities of other egos; it must discriminate between a racial *form,* and the classes of intelligence which it embodies at any given period. There may now be incarnated among the so-called advanced races many egos of little more than "savage" intelligence. Indeed, there appears to be far less moral character among the masses of today than during other periods. In only the few years that have elapsed since the writing of *The Ocean of Theosophy,* radical changes in the composition of society may be observed. Mr. Judge speaks of "the great mass of self-sacrificing courageous, and strong poor people who have but little time to think," as constituting a "distinct class." These qualities, while clearly discernible in individuals, are rapidly ceasing to be applicable to any "class" of society. Modern observers view this social disintegration with alarm, seeing as the cause the recent rapid advances of physical science. This, however, cannot be more than a superficial or "implementing" factor which serves the purposes of Karma and the cycle of collective reincarnation. Consider the following analysis of western civilization offered by William McDougall, a leading psychologist:

> It is in the United States that the applications of physical sciences have been made on the greatest scale, and it is there we may see most clearly the effects and tendencies of such application in changing customs and institutions; especially we see there the breaking down of the family as the foundation of morals and of the State, . . . we see many other social changes rapidly going on; and most of these are features of the attempt to live by the light of reason in place of tradition, an attempt in part accepted as good and deliberately fostered, but in the main compelled as a consequence of the decay of tradition that inevitably results from the free mixing and blending of populations

of very different traditions. For under such mixing and blending the various traditions weaken and destroy one another by mutual attrition. And not only are they weakened as influences moulding the characters of the citizens; the very term "traditional" becomes a term of contempt and opprobrium; and of all traditions the most delicate, subtle and indispensable, the moral tradition, is the first to fall into irremediable decay.

All this has its bright side, its advantages, and is welcomed enthusiastically by the very influential school of "behaviourists" who, having persuaded themselves and half their countrymen of the truth of a very crude and grossly over-simplified mechanistic view of human nature, have an overweening faith in the power of education (directed according to their own pathetically inadequate principles) to mould all men according to any desired patterns. The bright side is that such detachment from tradition renders men fit fodder for the industrial warfare and promotes the prosperity of the age of mass-production; it makes them adaptable and amenable, subject to all the arts of the advertiser and the high-powered salesman; it destroys their immunity to the rhetoric of the faddist, and renders possible rapid innovations, especially all such as superficially seem rational . . . the dark side of the picture is the enormous prevalence of corruption and of crime. Corruption pervades every level of society from the highest levels downwards; and crime, waxing fat and prosperous, uses corruption in the spheres of business and of politics, in the judiciary and the police, to establish itself in impregnable defiance of society. So far has this gone that the very existence of civilized society is threatened.[1]

What is the *moral* diagnosis of such conditions? Mechanical progress cannot of itself induce the surrender of individual judgment to glib authority in questions of social and personal morality. Dr. McDougall describes a cycle of *egoic* decline, such as preceded the thousand years of night in Europe.

However, the Theosophical view of these tendencies is far less pessimistic. Says H. P. B.:

We are only in the Fourth Round, and it is in the Fifth that the full development of *Manas,* as a direct ray from the Universal MAHAT—a ray unimpeded by matter—will be finally reached. Nevertheless, as every sub-race and nation have their cycles and stages of developmental evolution repeated on a smaller scale, it must be the more so in the case of a Root-Race. Our race then has, as a Root-race, crossed the equatorial line and

[1] *World Chaos,* London, 1931 (Kegan Paul).

> is cycling onward on the Spiritual side; but some of our sub-races still find themselves on the shadowy descending arc of their respective national cycles; while others again—the oldest—having crossed their crucial point, which alone decides whether a race, a nation, or a tribe will live or perish, are at the apex of spiritual development as sub-races. (*S. D.* II, 301.)
>
> Pure Anglo-Saxons hardly three hundred years ago, the Americans of the United States have already become a nation apart, and owing to a strong admixture of various nationalities and inter-marriage, almost a race *sui generis,* not only mentally, but also physically. . . .
>
> Thus the Americans have become in only three centuries a "primary race," *pro tem,* before becoming a race apart, and strongly separated from all other now existing races. They are, in short, the germs of the Sixth sub-race, and in some few hundred years more, will become most decidedly the pioneers of that race which must succeed to the present European or fifth sub-race, in all its new characteristics. (II, 444-5.)

Regarding American civilization in this light, the tendencies described by Dr. McDougall are seen to be due to those of our sub-races still on "the shadowy descending arc of their respective national cycles," whose activities are almost inextricably associated with the forward surge of evolution, thus giving it a decidedly hopeless appearance. For we are now a *primary* race, *before* becoming a race apart.

The knowledge of cyclic evolution provided by Theosophy is the only key to the irreconcilables of science, religion, and speculative philosophy. The *lines* of evolution which are subject to cycles enable the student to distinguish between the material basis and the spiritual cause, while the teaching of the classes of monads explains the difference among the beings engaged in evolution. Hopes and strivings for progress in any other light are at best but *dreams,* which can only end in painful awakening.

Root of Evil

The philosophical view of Indian metaphysics places the Root of Evil in the differentiation of the Homogeneous into the Heterogeneous, of the unit into plurality. —H. P. Blavatsky.

THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

WRITING in 1877 in *Isis Unveiled,* H. P. Blavatsky concerned herself with the two great poles of human experience, and with the struggles to account for them. One of these poles is symbolized by the word Science, the other by Theology, and hence the two volumes of her first great treatise bear those words as sub-titles. Although addressed to science and religion, the work itself is dedicated to The Theosophical Society, formed two years earlier. The reason is self-evident: not a scientific body, not a theological assembly, not an educational institution then in existence would have suffered, let alone sponsored, such a message as she had taken upon herself to deliver. She had to find her forum as well as her audience, to draw inquirers, students, disciples, from sources as hostile to her mission, as she was alien to them.

Theosophists, at least, whatever their dissensions and differences of individual and sectarian opinion, should be able to observe the contrast between conditions then and conditions now in the public arena. They should be able to appraise something of the forces at work, the influence exerted, the direction given, from the invisible as well as the visible side of the Theosophical Movement inaugurated by H. P. B. All real knowledge is acquired by proceeding from the known to the unknown, not the other way about. This can be seen by reflecting that whatever is perceived comes from beyond our horizons, that those horizons exist only in ourselves, not in space, time, or the procession of events. The reign of law is universal, not particular. Yesterday, to-day, tomorrow are integral, not divisible. Experience is continuous, not interrupted. Knowledge is an entirety, a unity, and intelligence is one, however many minds there be. The present is merely a point of view, a center of action, a focus of experience, as was yesterday, and as will be tomorrow. All three—point, center, focus—are as non-dimensional as space, motion, time. All three exist in Self, and in Self alone.

This doctrine of the *Omnipresent* Spirit or Self is the heart of the mission and message of H. P. B., as it has been that of every great Teacher. Of all known "realities" what is nearer, more intimate, more enduring in every sense than Self—whatever our conception of Self may be? And of all unknown things, of what are we more profoundly ignorant than of Self? The known and the unknown are not two separate realities. Self in ignorance or misconception and the Self of knowledge are not two identities, but the

two poles of Being, the mind of man the armature between. The field of vision or of thought is like a sphere the radii of which proceed from one's self in every direction, and extend out into space, opening up boundless vistas all around. It is the symbolical circle of Pascal and the Kabalists, "whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere." To *realize* the meaning, however, the sphere must be thought of as seen from its center—and that center is the Seer, the Self in everything and everyone, albeit no-thing and no-one.

This conception was absent, in theory and in application, from Western science and theology in all their many schisms and collisions, when H. P. B. began her work. She saw what the sectarian- and the scholastic-minded can never see, that the "struggle for survival" is Spiritual, not merely physical, as science would have it, nor simply psychical, as theology deals with it. These two gladiators were not only engaged in a life-and-death combat with each other, they had for centuries been debasing the popular mind. Her appeal, therefore, had to be addressed "unto Caesar" and to the mass over whom Caesar rules, if the arena were by any possibility to be converted into a forum.

Now, after sixty years, Theosophists should be able, individually, to see, as in the past, what she saw as in the present and the future. Collectively, such a vista is not yet possible, because her own disciples and students themselves are victim to that "heresy of separateness" which breeds materialism and psychism within every spiritual movement.

H. P. B. wrote in *Isis:*

> . . . *the religion of the ancients is the religion of the future.* A few centuries more, and there will linger no sectarian beliefs in either of the great religions of humanity. Brahmanism and Buddhism, Christianity and Mahometanism will all disappear before the mighty rush of *facts*. . . . But this can only come to pass when the world returns to the grand religion of the past; the *knowledge* of those majestic systems which preceded, by far, Brahmanism, and even the primitive monotheism of the ancient Chaldeans.

Those *Chaldeans,* she explained, were not a nation or a people, but a community of Adepts, and of these Wise men of old she recites that—

> . . . from the first ages of man, the fundamental truths of all that we are permitted to know on earth was in the safe keeping of the adepts of the sanctuary; that the difference in creeds and religious practice was only external; and that those guardians of the primitive divine revelation, who had solved every problem

> that is within the grasp of human intellect, were bound together by a universal free-masonry of science and philosophy, which formed one unbroken chain around the globe. . . .
>
> Who knows the possibilities of the future? An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin—nay, has already begun. The cycle has almost run its course; a new one is about to begin, . . .

"The reign of Saturn," she elsewhere indicated, which has endured for nearly twenty centuries, will be over in the twenty-first of our era. And again, she affirmed that her own mission was the sixth in an orderly 100-year cycle instituted in the West as in the East. Only when the real nature of the mission of Tsong-Kha-Pa is better understood will the secret of the Renaissance become known. Only when "the reign of Saturn" is studied as a problem in Occult Psychology will one gain some apprehension of the alteration in "human nature" which produced our historical and modern civilizations. Only when the mission and message of H. P. B. are appraised in the light of the "fundamental truths" she restored to currency in the circulation of thought will Theosophists perceive the significance of that New Cycle now almost at its birth-hour—the cycle of *Buddhi*-Manas as the opposite of the cycle of *Kama*-Manas, or, in other words: the conception of Self implicit in the "Three *Fundamental* Propositions" of *The Secret Doctrine*—a conception made explicit in the "Three Objects" of the Theosophical Society.

Only as Theosophists relate the present of the Movement to its past will they be able to discern what is to be its future, and to work intelligently toward the consummation pictured by H. P. B. in the closing Section and the closing words of *The Key To Theosophy*. As visible in the various theosophical and near-theosophical bodies, the course, so far, embodies departures from, not applications of, the "fundamental truths" and their essential "Objects" as she taught and exemplified them.

What room, then, is there for hope that will inspire and encourage the few "true Theosophists," as she called them, in all these sectarian bodies? Negatively, this: "The era of disenchantment" which in "the reign of Saturn" took twenty centuries to reach, has in sixty years been achieved among Theosophists—hence the ferment in all the many theosophical bodies as well as in the religious and scientific sects and school. What is all this but the necessary disintegration which must take place concomitantly with the "era of rebuilding" which she wrote in 1877 "will soon begin," and which has now begun—for it is visible in whatever direction one looks with a discerning eye.

What was that "religion of the ancients" which is to become the "religion of the future"? H. P. B. speaks of that "religion" in *The Secret Doctrine:*

> No sooner had the mental eye of man been opened to understanding, than the Third Race felt itself one with the ever-present as the ever to be unknown and invisible ALL, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with divine powers, and feeling in himself his *inner* God, each felt he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the "Sons of Light." Those who fell victim to their lower natures, became the slaves of Matter. From "Sons of Light and Wisdom" they ended by becoming the "Sons of Darkness."

Those men of the "Third Race" are now ourselves, once more engaged in the culminating point of the era of disenchantment and rebuilding which shall bring our civilization into the Light or plunge it into still deeper Darkness. The major opportunity given, therefore the major responsibility incurred, is what needs to be "pondered over, meditated upon, and as much as possible understood and applied in conduct by every Theosophist worthy of the Name."

True Science

We work for true Religion and Science, in the interest of fact as against fiction and prejudice. It is our duty, as it is that of physical Science—professedly its mission—to throw light on facts in Nature hitherto surrounded by the darkness of ignorance. And since ignorance is justly regarded as the chief promoter of superstition, that work is, therefore, a noble and beneficent work. But natural Sciences are only one aspect of SCIENCE and TRUTH. Psychological and moral Sciences, or theosophy, the knowledge of divine truth, wheresoever found, are still more important in human affairs, and real Science should not be limited simply to the physical aspect of life and nature. Science is an abstract of every fact, a comprehension of every truth within the scope of human research and intelligence.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS' FORUM

EMINENT *men have often deprecated Democracy as a form of government, pointing to the many abuses which arise to the detriment of society. Plato showed little approval of this system in the Republic, and some of the founders of our own government saw great dangers in popular rule. Among modern thinkers, Alexis Carrel is one who would institute government by a benevolent and highly trained oligarchy, which when necessary would employ force. How does Theosophy deal with this question, philosophically and practically?*

Government, or "order," is a universal fact in nature. Every organism, from the minutest conceivable atom to a solar system and beyond, is governed by intelligence or intelligences that constitute the spiritual aspect of evolution. Our governments, good and bad, are imitations of this universal law.

Science would have us believe that each organism is a resultant of the interaction of its parts. But this explanation is unable to answer the question: How do our bodies keep their shape? If it were possible to view our vehicles, bodily and planetary, with "molecular" vision, we would see myriads of whirling atoms the action of which as a mass is confined to a particular locus or sphere in space. We would see atoms leaving this sphere and others taking their place, but the mass as a form remaining unchanged. What draws these lives together? What keeps them in place? What releases them? It is the *governor,* the superior synthesizing consciousness, the creator, the sustainer, and the destroyer of all forms.

A high degree of order prevails in the lower kingdoms because the lives follow perfectly the dictates of their governor—Instinct. But in the government of human society, a new factor appears. Man has mind, and consequently, choice. This power may be exercised either intelligently, or in a way that must produce disorder and inharmony.

In the childhood of our race we were governed by great King-Initiates who taught men the art of living. The ancient scriptures tell of a being called Vivaswat, symbolic of the perfected men of former periods of evolution, who undertook to guide mankind from its beginning. He had himself, ages before, gone through incarnation in other systems of worlds and had mounted step by step up the long ladder of evolution until by natural right he had become as a "god." After the race had grown sufficiently, this

Being left the spiritual succession to Manu, who carried on the work until men arrived at the point of development where they furnished out of their own number one who was capable of founding a line of rulers. Then Manu retired, leaving the succession to the royal sage, Ikshwaku, who established a line of solar kings. These men of supreme knowledge ruled as great adepts until the age no longer permitted their open presence amongst men.

This period of history has been called the Golden Age. In the *Republic,* Plato says that before the construction of the first cities, Saturn established on earth a certain form of government under which men were very happy. In the words of H. P. B.:

> . . . Saturn, knowing that man could not rule man, without injustice filling forthwith the universe through his whims and vanity, would not allow any mortal to obtain power over his fellow creatures. To do this the god used the same means we use ourselves with regard to our flocks. We do not place a bullock or a ram over our bullocks and rams, but give them a leader, a shepherd, *i. e., a being of a species quite different from their own and of a superior nature.* It is just what Saturn did. He loved mankind and placed to rule over it no mortal King or prince but—"Spirits and genii . . . of a divine nature more excellent than that of man." (*S. D.* II, 373.)

Just as a child must learn to become responsible, to rely upon and govern himself, so, too, was it necessary that the races of men should more and more become self-governed. Therefore the adepts, having taught mankind the fundamental truths of life, gradually withdrew in order that the present races might take their evolution into their own hands. Man cannot evolve or progress except through his own exertions.

In the present fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root Race, Manas or mind is the faculty of the soul which normally should be in the ascendancy. The question is, therefore, What form of government should prevail at this particular stage of soul evolution?

Would an oligarchy—a government by an elite, a select group or caste of men—serve the pressing needs of the race? Is this a government which would encourage the exercise of self-induced and self-devised efforts on the part of the citizens? An oligarchy is based on the principle that all men are not equal, therefore the best in the race should govern. But who is to decide upon the ones best fitted to rule? In the oligarchy suggested by Dr. Carrel, the best are the greatest intellects and minds of the day, who for half their lives have engaged in an uninterrupted study of all the sci-

ences, physical and metaphysical, and who should therefore be the most capable of governing. Without going into the many practical objections to this, we may simply ask—by what criterion will the best be chosen? How, in the education and development of these "great minds," are greed, ambition, selfishness and injustice, and all the weaknesses of human nature, to be eradicated?

Any clear-seeing man must realize that a true democracy (*demos*—people; *kratos*—authority), a government of self-induced and self-devised efforts—a government *of* the people, *by* the people, and *for* the people—offers the greatest opportunity for spiritual, mental, moral and physical freedom. But where do we find true democracy? The so-called democracies of the day are, as the question suggests, lacking in many ways. Washington said: "In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." The public opinion of the day is little concerned with civil liberty, religious liberty and freedom of thought. These higher liberties are all too often willingly exchanged for the hope or promise of economic security—"a mess of pottage." The political spoils go to those who cater to the material desires of the masses.

We hear much about making democracy "work." This can be accomplished only through *self*-government. But in order that a nation may be self-governed, the states composing that nation must be self-governed. In order that the states may be self-governed, the cities and towns composing that state must be self-governed. In order that the cities and towns may be self-governed, the families therein must be self-governed. In order that the families may be self-governed, the individuals composing the family must be self-governed. And in order that an individual may be self-governed, he must have self-knowledge—he must know the principles and laws of self-government, and understand his place in the scheme of evolution.

To the assertion that democracy, like charity, "begins at home," the man in the street may reply, "Impossible; you can't change human nature." But those who have had a glimpse of the glorious heights opened to the student of Theosophy avow that this can and must be done. The United States has reached a most critical point in its career. The moment of choice may not be far off. Will the fall of Rome be re-enacted here? Not if theosophists take to heart the words of H. P. Blavatsky:

> In your hands, brothers, is placed in trust the welfare of the coming century; and great as is the trust, so great is also the

> responsibility. . . . Theosophy alone can save it from sinking entirely into that mere luxurious materialism in which it will decay and putrefy as civilizations have done.

Theosophists strive to fit themselves "to become true citizens of a Republic of Brotherhood in this land, and brothers to all men and nations throughout the world. This means becoming true Theosophists."

The Adepts, it is said, played a part in the founding of this country, and we know that Thomas Paine stirred up the fires of patriotism which carried the war for Independence to a successful conclusion. Can we assume, therefore, that Adepts may employ force as a necessary instrument to their ends? — that, according to Theosophy, war is sometimes justifiable?

(*a*) The Theosophical Adepts work from the basis of universal principles, using the plane of ideas as their field of action. Their scope is a universal one, embracing the welfare and progress of every being connected with this globe. When the time and circumstances warrant, under cyclic law, They use the great characters of the age to carry forward Their work for the benefit of humanity. The Adepts stand behind the scenes as the Inspirers in the cause of righteousness, virtue and true knowledge. They furnish powerful, impelling ideas which like sparks are scattered far and wide. But— "Nothing is forced or depends upon favor. Everything is arranged in accordance with the best interests of a nation, having in view the cyclic influences at any time prevailing, and never before the proper time."

The Adepts are not by any means the instigators of war. But when a nation of people suffers from tyranny, and particularly when the oppressed land is destined to be the scene of "a new order of ages," as was America, They may bring their influence to bear at the proper time in behalf of the afflicted ones. The Adepts through the agency of Thomas Paine (though he was perhaps unconscious of the fact) succeeded in rousing and uniting the American people. This does not mean that armed force was the sole means of accomplishing the necessary readjustment. Had England heeded the advice given by her eminent statesman, Edmund Burke, the American revolution might never have been necessary. Burke worked for the removal of the causes of colonial discontent by granting the Americans their rights.

The question as to whether or not war is sometimes justifiable is answered by Mr. Judge in his article in *The Theosophist,* June, 1884. He says: " . . . my own unsupported opinion was and is that

the American revolution was a just one, started to accomplish a beneficial end, and that the Hindu or Tibetan Mahatmas would not be disgraced by any connection with it . . . " He then narrates how Count St. Germain induced General Von Steuben to come to the aid of the colonies in the cause of liberty.

(*b*) In the advance of civilization there may come a time—very soon, perhaps—when the overthrow of tyranny and cruel autocracy will be unaccompanied by violence and the shedding of blood. It is right to rebel against unjust despotism; but to indulge in a sanguinary conflict is the least desirable way to do it. In the past, however, active strife has usually been the method for achieving liberty. But how can we know that this was the only possible course during the American Revolution? Perhaps the Adepts strove in vain with human ignorance in an endeavor to bring this new country to birth through a peaceable adjustment of our difficulties with England. Without a doubt, they also helped the downtrodden masses in Europe, before the French Revolution got out of hand.

But these were times when "there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice." Then the Adepts work, visibly and behind the scenes, "for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness." What of wars of aggression, bred of hate and fear? How can the Adepts take part in great *Terreurs* and greedy invasions? Theosophists will remember the term, the "Guardian Wall." The Masters have ever done all they can, under Karma, to prevent war-like feeling as well as the state of war, and to hold back its disastrous effects. Since they see on the plane of causes, they know when peace can no longer be maintained, and this long before it is evident to ordinary men. It might then appear to the unthinking that the Adepts bring on war by their activities, when such is not the case at all. Why might not an inevitable and immediately destructive force serve to avoid other and still greater evils? To the Adepts, no crisis is hopeless; they use persons and social forces, whatever their appearance may be, guiding them into channels of greatest possible benefit to humanity.

It may be wondered why the Adepts do not prevent wars altogether. So long as there is hatred or fear in the world, war is inevitable. This is Karmic Law. It is also true that War simply cannot come about in a world where mutual trust and brotherhood exist. *So long as war may be averted,* the great lovers of humanity work for peace. When war is seen to be unavoidable they can do no more than try to assuage its bitterness. The Adepts have them-

selves said that they can only guide and direct the minor currents in human events, since mankind is the final arbiter of its own destiny.

Count St. Germain was an Adept who worked before the French Revolution. He repeatedly warned the King and others of the inevitable debacle if the corruption and cruelty of the aristocracy continued. Says H. P. B.:

> . . . it is our firm conviction based on historical evidence and direct inferences from many of the *Memoirs* of those days that the French Revolution is due to *one* Adept. It is that mysterious personage, . . .the Count St. Germain—who brought about the just outbreak among the paupers, and put an end to the selfish tyranny of the French kings—the "elect, and the Lord's anointed."

The questioner asks if war is sometimes justifiable. There was a war against unjust usurpation long ago on the plain of Kurukshetra. This is the only true war—the war against hatred and fear, within human nature. When from that battle the Souls of men emerge victorious, there will be no more wars on earth, for their cause will have disappeared.

Past and Future

If the professors of modern knowledge would only confess that, though they know nothing of the future of the disembodied man—or rather will accept nothing—yet this future may be pregnant with surprises and unexpected revelations to them, once their Egos are rid of their gross bodies—then materialistic unbelief would have fewer chances than it has. Who of them knows, or can tell, what may happen when once the life cycle of this globe is run down and our mother earth herself falls into her last sleep? Who is bold enough to say that the *divine Egos* of our mankind—at least the elect out of the multitudes passing on to other spheres—*will not become in their turn* the "divine" instructors of a new mankind generated by them on a new globe, called to life and activity by the disembodied "principles" of our Earth? All this may have been the experience of the Past, and these strange records lie embedded in the "Mystery of language" of the prehistoric ages, the language now called Symbolism. —H. P. Blavatsky.

SPENCER'S "UNKNOWABLE"

IN many of H. P. Blavatsky's writings she has frequent occasion to employ the word "Unknowable" in statements referring to what, in *The Secret Doctrine,* is given as the first of its three fundamental propositions. Very often she uses this and other common words within quotation marks. Various questions naturally arise in the reader's mind over this and other characteristics in her language as well as in her ideas. The two, in fact, go together.

Theosophists, like other men, are as a rule too much occupied with the passing panorama we call the present to give much attention to what they regard as past or future. At best, only the immediate future or the immediate past gives them any practical concern. This is very much *not* as it should be, if Time really signifies the continuity of consciousness and the unbroken series of events. So long as we regard Self, action, and time from a separative, a fractional point of view, so long will what is implicitly but actually present appear only as a chaos to our minds as well as to our senses—a disorderly world, which is but another way of saying we will deal with ideas, events, causes and effects as partly under law and partly subject to chance or miracle. Karma and reincarnation, the various principles, the states before and after death, their orderly phases, will be but barren articles of belief for the theosophist—a mere credo of dogmas.

The past is not affected by our neglect of it—but we are. The future is not corrected by ignoring it, and so, the lives to come will but repeat the present, as the present is repeating the past—at haphazard. If we are to gain and keep true orientation during earthly existence, or in any of the other states from which we come and to which we go, we have to learn triangulation in the mathematics of the Soul. The present is always the base-line of action, but the two angles of vision are those of the past and the future. If we do not hear and heed the voice of the past, which is that of all prior experience, we cannot see and read the future wisely. "To hear and see," says *The Voice of the Silence,* "this is the second stage"—in Discipleship, or Soul-evolution.

And what is the first? It is that which is common to all men—Feeling and feelings. It is not what is seen or heard, not the reason and the conscience, the spiritual senses of order and justice, which determine human reactions to events and environments, but the sense of feeling. Feeling and feelings rule mankind in ordinary affairs

as well as in major crises, almost as entirely as they constitute the natural government in the animal kingdom. As with all the senses, feeling may be related to either of the three worlds and their inhabitants—may be monadic or spiritual, intellectual or psychic, physical or astral, or may in man become a confused mixture of all three. And this is the case with most men—constitutes their human tendency to err and to error, even when they have "the best of intentions." The spiritual sense of feeling manifests in animals as instinct, in human consciousness as intuition. In either case feeling represents the unity of all the senses on any plane, temporarily or permanently. The province of reason is the right relation of the senses and sensations. The true Disciple is one who, upon coming in contact with the great ideas of Theosophy, recognizes them for what they are. He feels them to be true. But since his existence is on a plane of senses and sensations, of good and evil, of right and wrong, of contrasts of every kind, unless he proceeds to the second stage with his inner eyes and ears open, unless he uses intensively his reason and his sense of justice, his position will inevitably become analogous to that of the animals on their plane. Although they have instinct, an infallible guide if there were no interferences, the embodied beast is, actually, in the midst of interferent forces, and so, suffers accordingly. Thus with the man who feels Theosophy to be true: he lives in the midst of interferent activities of every kind, and so, must employ the Trinity of the spiritual nature if he would not be diverted or perverted. He has to learn to use the higher trinity of Soul-powers as one, not one of them as the trinity, as do the animals.

In applying all this to Spencer's "Unknowable" and to H. P. B.'s various statements thereon, the time aspect of any scripture has to be borne in mind, perhaps first of all. It has been nearly fifty years —two generations—since H. P. B. laid aside her pen. What she taught is time-less, but the record itself is in time—past time. The books then current, the leaders of thought then living, no longer exist in any vital sense. They "belong to the past," they are "ancient history" to the writers of books, the leaders of thought, of today. How much more is this the case with the readers of present-day literature, the followers of the figures now on the stage of active life—our life.

When H. P. B. wrote, Huxley, Tyndall, Haeckel, were the colossi of Science, Herbert Spencer the foremost English philosopher of his generation. At best, these are but mere names today. Their books and their theories are as dead as their bodies. But their

ideas did not perish, their facts did not cease to be facts, any more than the "ultimate particles" of a body cease with its dissolution. These particles reincorporate in new and other forms. So in the world of mind: forms and systems perish, but the ideas and words which ensoul them persist, enter into new and changed combinations. Theosophists might remember with gratitude, remind themselves with profit, that Tyndall did more, perhaps, than any other man to popularize by making intelligible to the average man the fruits of scientific experiment. Huxley spent the last and most useful part of his life in a bold and open battle with the theological authorities and dogmas of the time. Haeckel, the most enormously erudite and prolific writer of the generation in the field of science, has left a lasting record of the opposite kind—the vanity and inanity of the speculative thinker, the mere theorist however learned, the folly of those who take such spendthrifts and their extravagances seriously. Is there no lesson here for some "leading theosophists" as well as "foremost scientists" now so prominent in the "public eye"—no lesson for those who listen avidly to their respective "latest revelations" and hypotheses?

As to Spencer, no one can read the story of his life, no one can study his writings, without sympathy for the moral integrity of the one, the intellectual honesty of the other. *The Secret Doctrine* contains twenty-nine references to Spencer and his views, thrice that number to the "Absolute" and the "Unknowable." She shows that Spencer's ideas, though by him regarded as his own in substance as well as form, are in truth but reproductions, metempsychoses of ancient psychology. Comparably with the great German thinkers of the nineteenth century, Spencer derived his ideas from Vedantic sources. Not a notion nor a conception in any of them which cannot be found better stated and better reasoned in Sankaracharya and other ancient Vedanta teachers of metaphysics.

How, rather than whence, did this renaissance of ancient philosophy and psychology reach the European mind, that of Spencer in particular? Practically all the others are known to have been students of Indian texts, original or in translation, and most of them refer to these writings in their own. But Spencer is known to have been devoted to metaphysics from the standpoint of physics. Like Huxley, with whom he collaborated in mental and personal intimacy for many years, he was an "agnostic" in attitude and outlook, but his own interest was none the less in the field of ethics, of psychology, of philosophy, of "First Principles." By contrast, these vast subjects meant to Huxley little more than

landscape objects glanced at in passing as he pursued his journey on the highroad of the "scientific"—that is, the physical universe. The pair should be regarded together by theosophical students, as showing the modifying influence of each upon the other, and thence upon the public mind.

Spencer was 68 when *The Secret Doctrine* was published. His work was done, though he survived for many years. Perhaps H. P. B. had a timeless as well as a contemporaneous knowledge and purpose in her references to Spencer and his philosophy. Perhaps she knew what Spencer did not—his Egoic past; knew him as an old Vedantin reborn, searching, groping, "for that knowledge which had been his own in former lives." Perhaps she could read, as he could not, the nature and scope of his orientation and influence in his next reincarnation to come—who knows how soon, or where? Perhaps, knowing the lines of his psychological past, she was working, in his case as in so many others, "in the then present for the future." On this plane, as on others, human existence is interrupted by "external and internal conditions which affect the determination of our will upon our actions." But this is not the case with *Mahatmas,* the Masters of Wisdom, "the Theosophists of the First Section of the Theosophical Movement"—and, measurably, not the case with "the Second Section," the Initiated Disciples of those Masters.

Spencer was but casually acquainted even with the Greek and Roman philosophers, was unconcerned with the Alexandrian Schools, the great Arabians, the occasional beacon-lights of medieval Europe, knew nothing of ancient Hindu philosophies. He was entirely occupied with his own work in his own generation, saw only through the atmosphere of his human environment of thought and action, read the "destiny written in the stars" in the wan light of one earthly existence. And yet—and yet "those rays illumined him," for he grasped many of the ideas of the Wisdom-Religion even though he failed to perceive their Source. But H. P. B. knew. Witness a single excerpt of many, taken from the Section of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* which deals with "Gods, Monads, and Atoms." Speaking of the hidden side of the Movement and of just such men as Spencer, H. P. B. says: "Yet it is all there, and one by one facts and processes in Nature's workshops are permitted to find their way into the exact Sciences, *while mysterious help is given to rare individuals in unraveling its arcana.*"

EVOLUTION AND SURVIVAL

PRACTICAL use of knowledge usually results from necessity. There is a vast difference between the way an engineer employs what he has learned at school, and the application of his education made by the average student. One who earns his livelihood through the control of natural forces and the knowledge of the properties of the physical elements must know the laws of physics as vivid realities. They are as much a part of his everyday life as eating and sleeping. The education of the engineer has an immediate and specific objective, and if he fails to apply what he learns, the graduate cannot stay in the profession of engineering.

Students of Theosophy may draw certain analogies from this illustration. There are, it seems, no external compulsions, as with the engineer, to force the theosophical student to apply the principles he studies. At our present stage of evolution, the actual laws of life are as esoteric to civilized men as the science of physics is to the savage. As a race, we govern our lives according to the rule of thumb, with the crudest sort of moral conceptions. The time must come, however, when the law of the "survival of the fittest" will prevail in this sphere of growth—when the *conditions* of survival have altered to moral qualifications alone.

A basic conception of the philosophy is that of evolution, which proceeds by means of the continuity of consciousness through conditions which are in constant change. These conditions, which form our substantial environment, must modify the direction of our development. Thus, in a world which is simply physical, there can be only physical evolution. So, also, with a mental world, with worlds moral and spiritual. Man, as a being potentially capable of acting on all planes, must therefore undertake his evolution in cycles, passing progressively from stage to stage—physical, psychical, intellectual and moral—as the gamut of experience of each is exhausted. This means that he has to learn the laws of each plane as he goes along.

There must be, in the nature of such a course, intermediate stages, points of transition, at which internal and external changes take place in his mode of progress: internal, with respect to his perceptive powers, and external with respect to the field of experience. The teaching is that a fundamental change is now going on in the race, particularly in the West. But there is little evidence of any alteration in our physical environment. There are, it is true,

occasional minor geological displacements, but these are rather "mechanical" than any perceptible change in the quality of the substance of matter. What, then, is the nature of the present transition?

We may approach this question subjectively—from the point of view of the individual student. For if the characteristics of imminent transition may be foretold in any way, the problems which he faces should be something of a clue. We are told that knowledge is not in books; that at best these are only guides, the key lying within the man himself. Where, in one's own experience, are the evidences of this change?

The theosophist is called upon to regard himself, his environment—the whole universe, as he sees and understands it—as his own creation. He endeavors to adopt the view that all phenomena, reality itself, are contingent upon his own power to perceive. His woes and joys alike, his loves and hates, are all of his own making. He can, in time, remake them all according to his heart's desire.

What effect does the assumption of such a position have upon the objective environment? Certainly there can be no immediate change in actual sense perceptions. At first the alteration can be only in the *significance* of experience. Thus, gradually, every externality loses its character as a mere inexplicable event, becoming the symbol of his own thought, will and feeling. The surroundings, physical and metaphysical, become a panoramic reflection of past action. Discrimination extracts the moral quality from each experience, and this becomes the real. As this vision gains in steadfastness, the old mistakes become impossible. The unbroken continuity of life in time and space turns the world into a universe of souls, one in essence, infinite in the diversity of their individual intelligences. While the world of the senses remains visible to the physical eye, its presentments are recognized as but shadows, imperfect and evanescent. In this view, sacrifice is no longer painful, but the highest privilege; the universal fraternity of all beings as undoubted as the sun in the heavens.

All great sages have held the physical body in contempt—a mere impediment once the soul's purpose in inhabiting it has been accomplished. Suppose a *race* were to adopt this view—what then? One of the laws of evolution is that when an organ is no longer useful to the intelligence which fashioned it, it atrophies, gradually disappears. So it will be with the physical bodies of the race, and with the physical planet we occupy, when, untold ages hence, humanity as a whole will have arrived at that point in its evolution when a

conscious existence in spirit is possible. But what of the laggards, those who have neglected to learn the lessons of physical existence during the time alloted by cyclic law? They, wedded to matter, will *remain in matter,* lost personalities of a dissolving dream.

Every cycle of evolution, great or small, repeats this mighty drama in fitting proportion. A race, a family, even a single incarnation of one soul—each provides the basis of experience from which the incarnating intelligence must step to higher altitudes and wider perspectives of life. The cycle runs its course, the old form dies, *because the collective meditation of the incarnating host is no longer focused or involved in the maya of thinking it to be reality.*

The meaning of the old injunction, Come ye out and be separate, is thus explained. The application of Theosophic principles means an unceasing search for reality. One who attempts to live this life steps into the forefront of intellectual and moral evolution—becomes "separate" from the delusions of the race as a whole, and therefore enters into true unity with the spiritual beinghood of all his fellows.

MODERN MYSTICISM

In ancient days it was all very well for mystics to write figuratively so as to keep sacred things from the profane. Then symbolism was rife in the air with mysticism, and all the allegories were understood at once by those for whom they were intended. But times have changed. In this materialistic age it is known that the wildest misconceptions exist in the minds of many who are mystically and spiritually inclined. The generality of mystics and their followers are not free from the superstitions and prejudices which have in church and science their counterpart. Therefore in my humble opinion there can be no justification for writing allegorically on mysticism, and, by publication, placing such writings within reach of all. To do so is positively mischievous. If allegorical writings and misleading novels are intended to popularize mysticism by removing existing prejudices, then the writers ought to express their motives. It is an open question whether the benefit resulting from such popularization is not more than counter-balanced by the injury worked to helpless votaries of mysticism, who are misled. In the present quarter of our century, veils are thrown by symbolical or misleading utterances over much that can be safely given out in plain words.

—W. Q. JUDGE.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Why I Don't Go to Church"

Lookout for November, 1937, took extensive note of Col. T. B. Luard's discussion of this question in the April, 1937, *Hibbert Journal.* Whether it be "telepathy," coincidence, or emulation, the *American* magazine for August, 1937, presents an article with exactly the same title, by William Corbin. While the English writer was concerned principally with a review of scholarly exploration into Biblical sources and the origins of sectarian belief, Mr. Corbin writes objectively of the prevailing attitude in America toward the Christian religion. His observations are the result of several years of investigation to find out why people "don't go to church." Unable to answer this question on his own account, he sought the reasons of other "backsliders." Having "interviewed a pretty fair cross-section of the United States," he now says: "Today I am convinced that I and millions of other Protestants who do not attend church are not, themselves, at fault. The church is at fault."

"Nothing Vital, Gripping, Enlightening"

Mr. Corbin's quest led him to visit every variety of religious ceremony, from an Alabama tent meeting to the Fifth Avenue palaces of worship. These are the conclusions of this self-constituted inquiring reporter of religion:

> My own conclusion, and that of the hundreds of people I have talked with, is that the church today, as we have found it, has nothing vital, gripping, or enlightening to say. Frankly, I have listened for one sermon that would open up a new vista of understanding and feeling, and I have listened in vain. I make many discoveries in modern books. Occasionally I see a motion picture that sweeps me off my feet, enlarges my outlook, moves me to better social behavior. Sometimes I meet a person whose knowledge and idealsim and actions are tonics. And these encounters are nearly all outside the church and for the large part involve non-church people.

Only "Personal Attraction"

> I know, of course, that every city of any size in the United States has at least one minister who "packs them in" every Sunday, and I would consider myself unfair to say that these preachers do not have something to say that many people want to hear. But such men as Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick of the Riverside Church,

New York, Dr. Burris A. Jenkins of the Community Church, Kansas City, Mo., and Dr. James Gordon Gilkey, South Church, Springfield, Mass., who preach to huge congregations weekly, are so brilliant, forceful, and many-sided that they can stride forward intellectually and carry the church along with them. I sometimes wonder whether some of the really great ministers I have heard, masters of psychology and literary style, and capable in many fields, could not have done more good without the impediments of the traditions they carry with them. Some of these men have been so widely publicized through their works in and out of the field of religion that they attract a steady stream of transient visitors.

RELIGIOUS "DRY ROT"

He offers a summary of the reasons given him by non-churchgoers as to why they stay at home:

> We do not go to church because the church has nothing to give us that we want. We have grown. The church has not. Everything palpable that it has to offer today we find in a superior form somewhere else. The functions once peculiar to it have been usurped or duplicated by more competent and effective agencies. And its essential mission, that of inspiring human beings, enriching personality, stimulating action, and ennobling thought and motive, is lost in a dust cloud of ancient history and dry rot.

CLERGYMEN EXPLAIN

The writer carried his questioning to ministers of various demoninations. He summarizes their explanations of declining church attendance in the following reasons:

> 1. The church, as a center of charity, has been replaced by secular civic and county chest funds, administered by businessmen and social workers. And a vast part of relief has been taken over by the government.
>
> 2. The church, as a fountain of healing, which once offered miraculous cures through faith and the "laying on of hands," has been replaced as physician by the science of medicine.
>
> 3. The church, which once exorcized devils from the mind of man and restored tranquillity of soul, is being replaced by gland specialists, dietitians, psychiatrists and psychologists, who hold that crime and abnormality are the result of disordered glands, improper nourishment, disease, poverty, ignorance, and mental derangement of one form or another.
>
> 4. The church, once the cradle of education and the founder of many colleges, is no longer the keeper of knowledge and the

source of education. Modern science springs from the laboratory. Knowledge is mined and pieced together through countless agencies, most of them secular. Newspapers, magazines, radio, books, motion pictures, and nonsectarian schools disseminate education.

5. Great art and music, once inspired by the church, are now secular and, for the most part, have nothing to do with organized religion. . . .

Religion "Crowded Out"

It becomes evident that there is nothing that the church has to offer which is not more effectively provided by secular institutions and activities. Churches which would keep pace with the world in the treatment of moral and psychological problems have resorted to the employment of university-trained psychologists. Finding this dwindling significance of religion in community life, Mr. Corbin reduced his investigation to one simple question: "What unique thing has the church to offer?" Receiving no satisfactory answer from the ministers, he turned to "the brighter students of the denominational seminaries of the country—bright young Evangels of the faith who tomorrow will take over the pulpits of the land." Following is his report of an interview with a group of seniors at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. He propounded his question, and—

A young man with flaming blue eyes and the high cheekbones of an orator shook his finger challengingly in my face and cried, "Do you believe in universality?"

"Well, yes," I said, "but I fail to see the application of the word to this problem."

He burst out again and talked for fully ten minutes, but I, a person of average intelligence and fairly familiar with words, confess that I understood none of it. It was sprinkled with such phrases as "implemented with God" (whereupon someone cried, "You mean God as a symbol"), "opposition and counter-opposition, and counter-counter-opposition!" I gave up.

And just before he departed—he had an engagement—he arose and said, "What is your ultimate interest?"

I said, "The payment of my life insurance."

He said, rather superciliously, I thought, "There can be no ultimate interest."

I said, "So what?"

We laughed and shook hands, and he departed like a gladiator who has just slain the bull.

BACK TO "JESUS"

Discussion with students of this and other divinity schools revealed that "young ministers of 1938 agree that the Protestant church, as a sociological institution, has failed." Some of them condemned the compromise made by the churches with the multifarious changing interests of the people. In Sunday School, Bible stories gave way to nature study; the churches built gymnasiums to hold the men; ministers stressed "culture," and dancing and motion pictures were introduced for the young. But the church has no monopoly on any of these things; it could not compete and so it failed. One young man answered Mr. Corbin's question directly:

> "The one unique and unchanging thing the church has to offer, now and forever, is the rock upon which it is built. Jesus Christ. . . . You may change the church basement into a dance floor to attract a crowd," he went on, unheeding. "You may build a projection booth for motion pictures. You may have different or more sprightly hymns, a nursery, or padded pews. You may build a gorgeous altar and have stained glass or not. Change everything around, but you cannot change Jesus Christ, Who is peculiar to us and unique to the world. The church, my friends, offers you Jesus, and He is offered nowhere else on earth today."

"EVASION OF THE NEEDS OF MILLIONS"

Enthusiastic agreement of many of the students with the views of this young man makes Mr. Corbin conclude:

> That is what I have found so far. A feeling that the church, in order to live and function, must return to primitive Christianity—the unadorned teaching of Jesus. Perhaps that is the answer. Perhaps that's what people want in church—pure religion of the old, old kind. But it isn't for me. It happened too long ago. Its background is not my background nor that of the people I know today. A return to unanswerable and unrationalized faith is to me retreat from the front of action, an evasion of the needs of millions like me.
>
> I feel like a musician without an instrument, a student without books, a man in a strange land without a guide or an interpreter. Meanwhile, I, a religious man, if not a churchgoing one, continue to grope. I wish I knew what I sought. . . .

To these sad words the heart of every Theosophist must echo: "Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them!"—and go on with their work.

Mechanism—A Technique of Study

Scientific writers discussing the opposed views of the mechanist and vitalist schools of biology frequently observe that the methods of the former are essential to the progress of scientific investigation. For, they argue, unless it be assumed that all life processes, the psychical as well as the merely physical, proceed under the known laws of nature, how can our knowledge of these processes be increased? A useful summary of this point of view is provided by Bertrand Russell (Introduction to Lange's *History of Materialism*):

> In our own time, the old battle of materialism persists chiefly in biology and physiology. Some men of science maintain that the phenomena of living organisms cannot be explained solely in terms of chemistry and physics; others maintain that such explanation is always theoretically possible. Professor J. S. Haldane may be regarded, in this country, as the leading exponent of the former view; in Germany it is associated with Driesch. One of the most effective champions of the mechanistic view was Jacques Loeb, who showed (*inter alia*) that a sea-urchin could have a pin for its father, and afterwards extended this result to animals much higher in the scale. The controversy may be expected to last for a long time, since, even if the mechanists are in the right, they are not likely soon to find explanations of all vital phenomena of the sort that their theory postulates. It will be a severe blow to the vitalists when protoplasm is manufactured in the laboratory, but they will probably take refuge in saying that their theories only apply to multi-cellular organisms. Later, they will confine vitalism to vertebrates, then to mammals, then to men, and last of all to white men—or perhaps it will be yellow men by that time. Ordinary scientific probability suggests, however, that the sphere of mechanistic explanation in regard to vital phenomena is likely to be indefinitely extended by the progress of biological knowledge.

Nervous Mechanics

The phenomena studied by the mechanists will continue to support their theories of causation so long as the field of investigation is restricted to those planes of life which lie beneath self-consciousness. It is equally certain that psychologists working on mechanistic assumptions will fail to recognize this basic limitation of their studies until the existence of the Soul or a choosing principle in man is granted the possibility of existence. This may occur when it is

seen that the fundamental questions as to the nature of human action and motivation still remain mysteries even though highly complex neural and psychological responses have been accounted for under mechanistic theory. Recent investigation by Dr. Herbert Spencer Gasser, Director of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, explains the workings of the nervous system in terms of the laws of electricity—more testimony favoring the mechanists. He reports that "The electrical manifestations of irritable tissues have much in common, whether the consideration be of cells of the plant nitella or nerves of mammals."

Nerve Cells "Electrical Condensers"

This discovery is consistent with the teaching of Theosophy that plants as well as animals have a subtle design body, electrical and magnetic in nature, although in the former its functions are not specialized on the physical plane by means of nerve ganglia, as with the animals. The following passages condensed from the New York *Times* (Nov. 5, 1937) provide interesting evidence of the electrical nature of nerve impulses:

> Apparently nerve cells are like tubular electric condensers, the inside of the walls being at a different electric potential from the outside. The nerve cells have been found, in general, to possess two interrelated types of potentials, relatively static potentials, indicating states, and transient potentials, accompanying action. When a nerve fiber becomes active there is a transient decrease in the potential difference. If the electrodes are connected to an oscillograph, it shows a sharp jump up and back, a kind of spike on an otherwise smooth curve. The effect, namely the spike, lasts, in mammals, about four-tenths of a thousandth of a second.
>
> Nerve messages are carried by a succession of these spikes. The potential difference (or state of electrical strain) spreads along the surface film of the fiber, each successive region being touched off by the next. Wherever observed the spike is of the same height. It must be supplied locally, as it does not die away with the distance traveled, as is the case of a message sent along a cable.

A Chain of Impulses

> The experiments have shown that excitation of the nerve cells, involved in the processes of feeling and consciousness, takes place where current passes from the inside through the fiber surface to the outside. This serves to excite the nerve

> cell in the adjacent region. The local current is supposed to operate as another excitation to the next cell, and so on along the surface, like one firecracker setting off the others adjacent to it. . . .
>
> I hope that I have succeeded in demonstrating that nerve activity is nothing more than the operation of mechanism, complex to be sure, but one working in an orderly manner according to laws the definition of which need not be considered as altogether beyond the powers of fine physical measurements.

"So Far Thou Shalt Go"

We may note that such investigations into the subtleties of the mammalian organism in no way explain the real nature of "feeling" and "consciousness," to which Dr. Gasser refers "in passing." Mechanistic analysis of this kind, however, may lead to a growing realization of the infinitely complex nature of the human *psyche* and should slowly and surely reveal the futility of mere fact-finding without an integrating philosophy of life. As put by H. P. B.—

> No doubt that the care of analyzing and classifying the human being as a *terrestrial animal* may be left to Science, which occultists—of all men—regard with veneration and respect. They recognize its ground and the wonderful work done by it, the progress achieved in physiology, and even—to a degree—in biology. But man's *inner,* spiritual, psychic, or even moral, nature cannot be left to the tender mercies of an ingrained materialism; for not even the higher psychological philosophy of the West is able, in its present incompleteness and tendency towards a decided agnosticism, to do justice to the inner; especially to his higher capacities and perceptions, and those states of consciousness, across the road to which such authorities as Mill draw a strong line, saying "So far, and no farther shalt thou go." (*The Secret Doctrine,* I, 636.)

Forecasting Death

Study of the characteristics of white blood cells enables Dr. Edwin E. Osgood, head of the department of experimental medicine, University of Oregon Medical School, to predict impending death. (New York *Herald-Tribune,* Oct. 3.) According to Dr. Richard B. Dillehunt, dean of the School, this "forecasting of death from a common physical factor in cases of vastly different natures is apparently without precedent." The method employed by Dr. Osgood is to stain the white blood cells with Wright's stain. When the colorization of these cells was more intense than usual, records showed that in most cases death followed in a short time.

> Other changes also were noted under these conditions. A second indication was the appearance of big blue grains of solid matter instead of numerous small lavender grains. The third was the appearance in the cell of vacuoles or what looked like gas bubble holes.

On the basis of these indications Dr. Osgood's predictions were fulfilled in ninety out of a hundred cases. However—"These indications may be present in some cases without immediate prospect of death and the absence of the signs does not mean that death cannot take place in a short time."

THE HIDDEN EXPLANATION

In *Letters That Have Helped Me* (II, 70), Mr. Judge discusses clairvoyant perception of the disintegration of the astral body prior to physical death. The relation between the condition of the blood cells and of the astral body should be evident. He states that this process may begin two years before the death of the physical body. Further—

> There are cases—perhaps rare—in which five years before the death of the physical, a clairvoyant has seen the disintegration of the astral beginning. The idea intended to be conveyed is, that regardless of periods of time, if the man is going to die naturally (and that includes by disease), the corruption, disintegrating or breaking up of the astral body may be perceived by those who can see that way. Hence the question of years is not involved. Violent deaths are not included in this, because the astral in such cases does not disintegrate beforehand. And the way of seeing such a death in advance is by another method altogether. Death from old age—which is the natural close of a cycle—is included in the answer as to death by disease, which might be called the disease of inability to fight off the ordinary breaking up of the cohesive forces.

AN AGE OF CRITICISM

> The division of the history of mankind into Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron Ages, is not a fiction. We see the same thing in the literature of peoples. An age of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness is invariably followed by an age of criticism and consciousness. The one affords material for the analyzing and critical intellect of the other. (*Isis Unveiled,* I, 34.)

So far, the twentieth century has little claim to the description of an age of" great inspiration." Modern writers are essentially critics and analysts, there having been published no great work

of *affirmative* significance for more than a generation. The negative character of modern thought is emphasized by the recognition that we have more or less exhausted the nutritive content in the writings of men who gave to the last century its inspiration and intellectual form. We now await and are preparing for a renaissance of the creative spirit. Discussing the need of a contemporary literature which is great, an editorial writer in the New York *Times* (Nov. 6, 1937) reviews suggestively the ideas of Secretary of Agriculture, Henry A. Wallace.

> We do not live by bread alone but by ideas and emotions, and these, as the Secretary said, are found in great books. There are not many really great books—a dozen might carry us down to the French Revolution, a dozen more span the gap between 1789 and 1937. The great religious writings survive, storytellers touch the fringes of immortality and the devastating idea-books endure, perhaps not because they are still widely read but because of the lasting impact they have made upon our civilization. We are not the slaves of machines, not the mere substance upon which economic forces act. In the beginning there is the word—for good, for evil.

Soul-Needs of Humanity

> But with few and immortal exceptions the mental and emotional food of one age is not that of succeeding ones. Calvin, Rousseau, Adam Smith, Hegel, Marx—such men lose their grip on us as the years pass. As Secretary Wallace said: "The books which played their part in producing modern capitalism, fascism and communism do not have in them sufficient food for the human soul." Their spell was potent; that of Marx, directly or inversely, lies heavy across the bosom of the world. But even Marx must have his day and pass. He is no final expression of humanity's deathless dream. Humanity does have a soul as well as a body. To Secretary Wallace it seems that "the stage is now being set for some of the most powerful books which the world has yet seen," that "humanity everywhere is hungry both for a new freedom and a new discipline."
>
> More than the pressure of hunger, it is a craving for new faith, for a cause to which the individual may willingly surrender, that has created the mass movements of our time. But the mass movements carry in them the poison that will kill them: whether their drive is back to the cave dweller or forward to the ant, they deny the dignity of the individual human soul. If a theory as to the nature of those great books to come can now be advanced, it may be suggested that they will reaffirm the sanctity of life, of free choice, of room for individual growth, against all coercions, economic or political.

TOM PAINE'S FORESIGHT

This vision is an irresistible reminder of the ideas of Thomas Paine. Mr. Wallace contributes a sequel to the inspired and inspiring theme set down in *The Age of Reason:*

> I saw, or at least I thought I saw, a *vast scene opening itself to the world* in the affairs of America; and it appeared to me that unless the Americans changed the plan they were then pursuing and declared themselves independent, they would not only involve themselves in a multiplicity of new difficulties, but shut out the prospect that was *then offering itself to mankind through their means.*

AMERICA—LAND OF THE PREJUDICED

Pearl Buck, in an article reprinted in pamphlet form from the *Survey Graphic,* writes *On Discovering America.* Having come home from many years of life in ancient China, she sought the America of romantic tradition—the glorious land of freedom and ideals painted to the heathen Chinese by American missionaries. Instead, she found a welter of contradictions: "I came to see that these true Americans I had been looking for did not exist at all, and there are no typical Americans." She records her disillusionment:

> . . . everywhere I was hurt and confounded by the amazing hatred among all these Americans for each other. I have heard such hatred for black Americans from white Americans, such venomous sullen hatred for white Americans from black Americans, that in another country I would have been afraid of immediate race war. And the hatred burns like wildfire in a hundred different directions. There is the hatred of the Jew and the Christian, of the native-born and the foreign-born, of the Protestant and the Catholic, and these are only a few of the greater hatreds. It is true also that combating each separate hatred, like a leash upon a beast, is an organization of people working for peace between any two opposing groups. But it is a question whether the leash is strong enough for the beast. At least, a sensitive mind at first cannot but be frightened and oppressed by the fearful prejudices of race and creed which possess the feelings of the average American.

A NATIONAL QUALITY

Still searching for a common element which could be identified as the unifying principle among the American people, she concluded that there was none except "restlessness":

> For we Americans, we are the restless, the restless of all nations. None but the restless has ever come to America. The

> quiet-hearted, the contented, the peaceful minds, are still on old country farms, in old country shops and business offices. They are not here. Not one of us belongs to them. A similar spirit has driven us out from among them and has driven us together. When visitors speak with wonder of the ceaseless hurry and activity which is such a part of the American temperament, I am not surprised. For were we not naturally restless, none of us would be Americans at all. There would be no America and Indians would roam our hills and valleys still. Restlessness, then, is our essential nature.

The "American Dream"

But within or behind this seething mass of incompatible ideas and ideals, of mutually encroaching appetites, she sees the embryonic promise of a civilization not yet born. Her vision, like that of Tom Paine, and, more recently, of James Truslow Adams and Henry Wallace, forms part of that intuitive utterance so well characterized as the "American Dream." There must be thousands of Americans whose hearts will beat deeply in response to this call to the Soul of a people:

> . . . we cannot make an American culture by sitting down and thinking about it and writing it down and giving it out to the newspapers. The Supreme Court cannot do it, and even President Roosevelt cannot do it. Nobody and nothing can do it except time, passing unconsciously and effortlessly over all our diversity, and gradually, with infinite slowness, wearing away differences, and leaving those essentials which will survive our struggles and our climate. It may be five thousand years hence—it can scarcely be less than a thousand—before the real American culture is here, and before we have a race of Americans. There will be no Negro questions then, because there will be no Negroes, there will be no Jews and Christians, no foreign-born —nobody but that person nowhere to be found today, a pure American. I cannot but believe he will be an extraordinary person, that pure American, who will be standing in my place five thousand years from today. He will have what no other human being has had in just the same richness, the inheritance of all ages, all races, all cultures. He will have a fine direct eagerness which will be our restlesness, refined by centuries, but concentrated, too, into a driving force which will carry him to heights of human knowledge which we cannot even dream of now. He will be a true specimen standing on the shoulders of those from all nations and races of the earth.

Students should read again H. P. Blavatsky's *Five Messages* to

the American Theosophists to recognize the real occultism in *O Discovering America.*

"THE TERRIBLE ALBIGENSES"

In a recent encyclical, Pope Pius XI urged Catholic bishops to use the rosary in prayer against Communism. The appeal is summarized in *Time* (Oct. 11), as follows: "As the terrible sect of Albigensians was overcome by the invocation of Mary, so, we hope shall then be overcome those who, as Communists of today, remind us of them by their craftiness and violence."

It is true that Dominic, founder of the Dominican order of preaching friars, employed the rosary in his vain endeavors to persuade the Albigenses, the Catharists of southern France, to give up their ideas of reincarnation, of the spiritual meaning of baptism and that the only hell is life on earth. But the time came when he lost faith in that rather mechanical instrument, and, quoting an old proverb, told these theosophical "heretics" that "where blessing can accomplish nothing, blows may avail." He warned them that "We shall rouse against you princes and prelates, who, alas! will arm nations and kingdoms against this land . . . and thus blows will avail where blessings and gentleness have been powerless."

ORIGIN OF THE INQUISITION

Thus, when Innocent III exhorted the northern French nobles under Simon de Montfort to "crusade" against the Albigenses Dominic undertook to prove the heresy of the victims. The Inquisition as an institution with special machinery for searching out heretics came into being during the crusade against the Catharists and it was organized under the direction of the Dominicans Throughout the thirteenth century the holy inquisitors tortured and burned the Albigenses. Nobles of northern France were recruited to the murderous campaign by the promise of papal indulgences and finally all resistance was put down after the rich districts of Languedoc and Provence had been devastated.

The "terrible" Albigenses led lives of virtue and purity. They were extreme ascetics, fasting three days of the week and observing three lents during the year. Initiation into the priesthood involved literal observance of the Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. They believed in the ultimate salvation of all men Such was the simple faith of these people of "craft and violence" who were exterminated by "the invocation of Mary."